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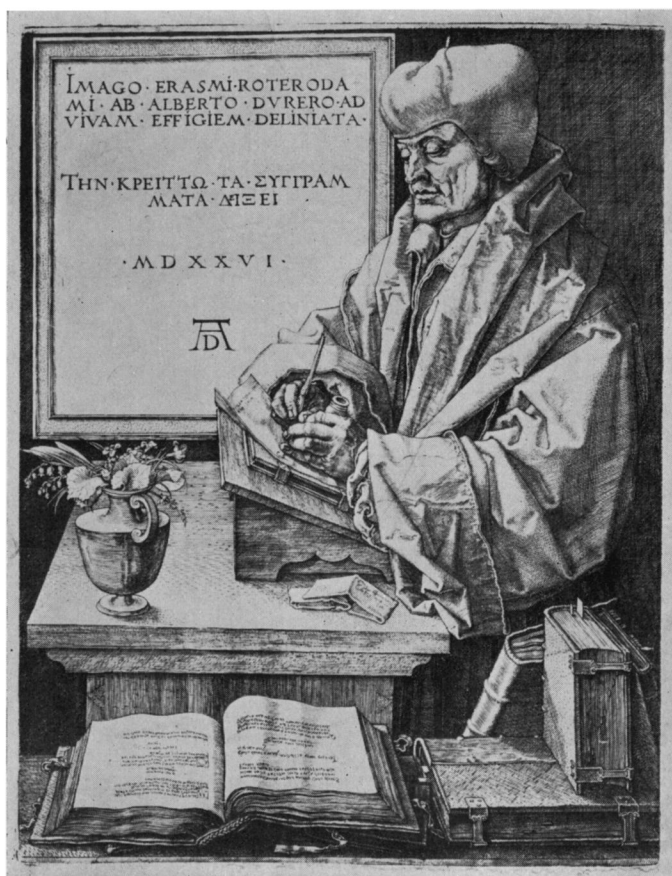
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BULLETIN OF THE CITY ART MUSEUM OF ST. LOUIS

VOLUME III

JUNE, 1917

NUMBER 2



DÜRER

ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM

THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

THE second floor galleries hitherto occupied by the print collection have been redecorated and the prints rearranged with a more pleasing effect and consistent installation. Now that the number of prints has increased to the point where something of a permanent classification is possible, the East Gallery has been assigned to the exhibition of early prints illustrative of the art of engraving from the time of Mantegna and the Italian engravers of the Fifteenth Century; of Schongauer and Dürer in Germany; of Van Dyke the Fleming and of Rembrandt the Dutchman; of Nanteuil and the great school of French portrait engravers of the Seventeenth Century and of the Drevets and their contemporaries in the Eighteenth Century; down to and inclusive of the work of Meryon, Whistler and Haden, and of contemporary etchers Zorn, Cameron and Muirhead Bone—thus affording the student an opportunity of studying the graphic arts in their complete development and various media through characteristic examples of the greatest masters of the art.

The West Gallery is devoted to prints of modern American Etchers and the American School of Wood Engraving from the time of Dr. Alexander Anderson, the father of wood engraving in America, to the present-day master of the art, Timothy Cole. In a subsequent number of the Bulletin some comment upon this part of the collection will be made.

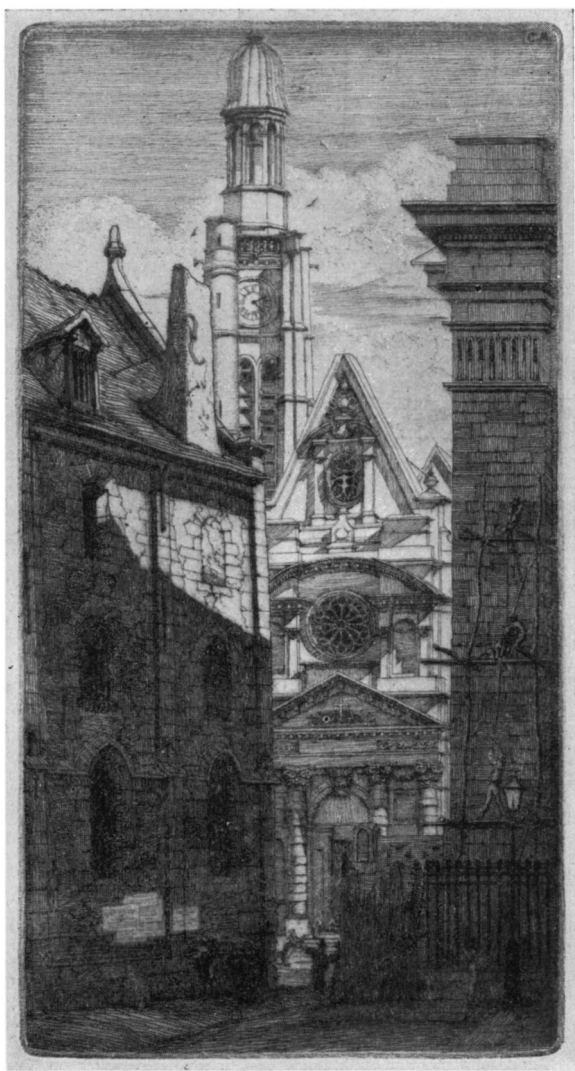
This division enables one for the first time to comprehend the ultimate aim of the Museum in forming a small but select collection of prints of fine quality which shall be of adequate range to be representative in

character and permanent in installation.

Now that a small fund is available for the systematic augmentation of the collection, it will be the endeavor to strengthen it where inadequate and render it as comprehensive as possible rather than attempt its expansion by the acquisition of many prints by any one master or school, however important in character. Some idea of its present scope may be formed when it is stated that it is representative of the work of not less than two hundred engravers and covers a period of more than four hundred years. To assemble a large collection being impossible as well as inadvisable, only such prints will be acquired of which the artistic merit is well assured, and the relation to the collection as a whole of significance.

Among the etchings recently acquired are notable examples of Van Dyke, Rembrandt, Meryon, Whistler, Haden and Bone; Ribera, Goya, Ruysdael and Millet, and line engravings by Dürer, Barthel and Hans Sebald Beham, Delff, Pontius, Masson and Nanteuil.

The fame of Van Dyke the Painter has overshadowed the fame of Van Dyke the Etcher, although he was one of the earliest practitioners of etching and is conceded to be one of the princes of the art. In his Iconography he sought to preserve the portraits of eighty of his contemporaries, but only eighteen of the plates were etched by him. Singularly enough, he intended his etched work to be elaborated by the burin of Vorstermans, Pontius and other engravers of his time, and it is only in the "unfinished" state of the plate that his masterly method of etching—open system of



MERYON

SAINT-ÉTIENNE-DU-MONT

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VAN DYKE PETER BREUGHEL THE YOUNGER

line and elimination of the non-essential—and distinguished style are seen to advantage, as in the portrait of Peter Breughel the Younger, which is one of the most admirable.

If Van Dyke was the prince of etchers, Rembrandt is the high priest. In the range and variety of his subjects—portraits, landscapes and figure compositions—he remains without a rival in the centuries that have elapsed since his death. Our recent accession, *Christ Preaching*—a plate at its best only in impressions with much burr raised by the dry point—is in its solemnity and spirituality surpassed only by his *Christ Healing the Sick* and the impressive plate of the *Three Crosses*. This particular impression is from the famous collection of Pierre Mariette and bears his signature, which, curiously enough, is likewise true of the *Landscape with a Mill Sail Above a Cottage*, selected for illustration. One of the larger land-

scapes of the artist, though not one of the more famous, its silvery gray tone invests it with an enduring charm.

Between Rembrandt and the lesser Dutch etchers of the Seventeenth Century a wide gulf exists; not that the work of Van Ostade, Bega and other etchers of the school is without technical merit and interest for the delineation of the homely peasant life of the period, but that the incomparable work of the master dwarfs the more obvious work of his less favored contemporaries. To the numerous examples of this prolific school a richly printed impression of Ruisdael's *Le Petit Pont* has been added, not so interesting a plate as his more celebrated plates of *The Corn Field* and *The Three Oaks*, but nevertheless one that is entirely characteristic of his style.

It is a far cry from the death of Rembrandt to the birth of Charles Meryon, but the interval produced no etcher of the first rank. Meryon's etchings of Paris show his masterly draughtsmanship of architectural monuments at its apogee, joined to imaginative qualities and technical skill that place him among the greatest masters of the art. Our illustration shows the famous church of *St. Etienne du Mont* in an impression of superb quality and luminous tone. Scarcely less interesting are his splendid plates of *Le Petit Pont*, *Le Pont au Change* and *La Pompe Notre Dame*—the latter on *papier verdâtre*, which gives a peculiar tone, not present in impressions struck upon white paper.

Among the several Whistlers recently acquired perhaps no plate of the *Thames Series* exemplifies his consummate skill as an etcher to a greater degree than the *Lime Burner*, although it is in his later Venetian series that his final convention of etching was manifested. Seymour Haden's large plate of the *Breaking*



DÜRER

ST. EUSTACE

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REMBRANDT

LANDSCAPE WITH A MILL SAIL ABOVE A COTTAGE

up of the Agamemnon, also reproduced, will doubtless remain because of its attractive subject his most popular plate, but in some of his dry points and less popularly known landscapes he has perhaps attained to a higher artistic level.

The portrait of Renan which Zorn presented to the Museum many years ago when he visited St. Louis, remains unsurpassed by his later work as an example of subtle characterization and of his incisive manner of etching, which is essentially impressionistic. "I studied him as he composed himself. I took my plate. I drew him," and although the plate was finished in an hour the massive head and ponderous form of Renan are drawn for all time.

In Muirhead Bone our own time may justly claim one of the great masters of etching. In the remarkable dry point of the Great Chantry Charing Cross Station his magnificent draughtsmanship may be seen at its best, although in such fine plates as Building, Liberty's Clock and Somerset House this rare attainment is ever present, as indeed it must ever remain fundamental in etching worthy of the name.

Spain boasts few etchers of renown and hitherto has been weakly represented, but the collection is now

strengthened by the famous plate of the Poet—one of the few attractive subjects of the gloomy minded Ribera—and of the Bull Fight by Goya—a plate pervaded by a peculiarly luminous tone and showing etched line and aquatint in combination; of Millet's Man with a Wheelbarrow, remarkable for the careful drawing which shows to perfection the solid construction and muscular action of the body; of Canaletto's Porch with a Lantern, a plate that exemplifies the characteristic qualities of the artist at their highest point, especially in the play of sunlight upon the surfaces of plastered wall and in his easy mastery of architectural drawing.

Chief in interest among the several Liber Studiorum plates acquired is a superb impression of Ben Arthur, Scotland, in the first state and from Turner's own collection. If all of the artist's other work were lost, Mr. Rawlinson says, "upon the strength of this plate alone his pre-eminent fame as a landscape painter would stand." Less majestic but not less beautiful in composition are the plates of The Bridge in the Middle Distance and the Junction of the Severn and the Wye, the latter of especial interest as being one of the few plates of the series drawn, etched and mezzotinted by Turner.

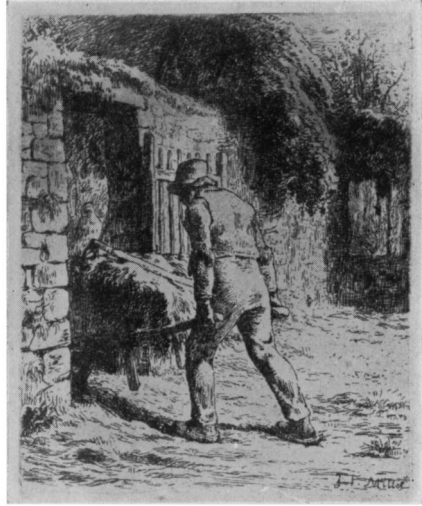


REMBRANDT

CHRIST PREACHING

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It is recorded of Erasmus that he did not consider Dürer's engraving a good likeness, and if Holbein's immortal portrait is to be preferred as more truthful, as indeed is quite probable, the criticism was justified. In its technical quality, however, it is unsurpassed and in decorative character it must ever hold a foremost place among engravings in line. In the same year, 1526, he engraved the homely face of Melanchton, more convincing as a likeness, but without the distinction of the Erasmus. It is interesting to study the faces of the great humanist and the great reformer as they hang side by side, in impressions of unusual quality and remarkable conservation. The Saint Eustace, also illustrated, has the distinction of being the artist's largest engraving upon copper, and this fine impression evidences his technical virtuosity at its best. It must be confessed, however, that in its somewhat confused composition it also exhibits his limitations as an artist.



MILLET THE MAN WITH A WHEELBARROW

To the numerous examples of the Little Masters in the collection have been added Barthel Beham's important portrait of the Emperor Ferdinand I and The Judgment of Trajan by Hans Sebald Beham, prints that exhibit the remarkable facility of these talented pupils of Dürer.

Although engraving in mezzotint is not of English origin—having been devised by Ludwig Van Siegen of Utrecht about 1642—it flourished best on English soil. It is a process peculiarly adapted to the translation of portraits, as it renders admirably the gradation of tone, and the quality of the painter's brush work is susceptible of being reproduced with fidelity. In the hands of such talented engravers as Valentine Green, McCordell, John Raphael Smith and a host of other equally talented engravers of the period whose work is of such importance as to constitute a school, it did much to popularize the work of the Eighteenth Century school of portrait painters. Our illustration shows the charming portrait of Miss Kemble engraved by John Jones after Sir Joshua Reynolds.



WHISTLER

THE LIME BURNER

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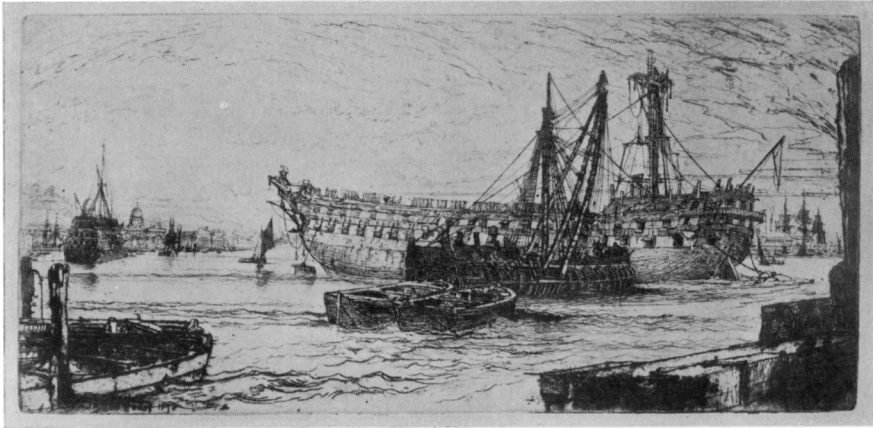
JONES

MISS KEMBLE

The small but select collection of Nanteuil's has been enlarged by an unusually brilliant impression of his wonderful portrait of Jean Loret, in

which all the subtlety and craft of this poet of the streets has been expressed in a face that holds attention if it does not command respect. It is a

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HADEN

THE BREAKING UP OF THE AGAMEMNON

print that would justify itself in any collection. This also applies to the beautiful and richly printed impression of Masson's *Guillaume de Brisaquier*, called the *Gray Haired Man*, in the rare second state and to a portrait of the *Baron Thurn* by William Jacobus Delff, one of the finer plates of the artist and in an early impression of such brilliance as to obscure his somewhat coarse technique. The well-known self-portrait of Rubens, engraved by Paul Pontius, completes the list of portraits, of which the collection contains not a few of the more famous.

In future issues of the *Bulletin* some comment on other important prints which the Museum is acquiring will be made to the end that its development may be followed and a standard of excellence established for those interested in this important branch of the fine arts.

S. L. S.

EXHIBITIONS

THE exhibition of paintings by Ignacio Zuloaga held this month includes the pictures, *Cándida*, *Pepita la Gitana*, *Merceditas*, *The Cardinal*,

The Brotherhood of Christ Crucified, *The Castle of Turégano*, *The Victim of the Fête*, *Segovia*, and the vivid bull-fighting scene, *Women on the Balcony*. An exhibition of water colors by American artists is on view at the same time.

A retrospective collection of French Art lent by the Luxembourg, Paris, France, will be shown in the Museum during July and a part of August. It covers the period 1870-1910 and will bring to St. Louis a notable collection, the exhibition of which is made possible at this time by the state of war, through the courtesy of the French government. St. Louisans who have visited the Luxembourg will welcome an opportunity to see in their city not only the *Balcony*, by Edouard Manet, but the portrait of *Madame Fantin-Latour*, by I. Fantin-Latour; of *Alphonse Daudet and his Daughter*, by Eugène Carrière; *Madame H.*, by Renoir, and other familiar masterpieces.

Seventy-one paintings will be shown; five pieces of sculpture, including Rodin's *Bellona*, and nearly a hundred medals, one of which is *Dupuis' Charity*; another, the *Marriage medal by Roty*.

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THE CITY ART MUSEUM OF ST. LOUIS

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BULLETIN

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